

DEEP DISH PIZZA CRUST

Abstract

A fully baked, deep dish pizza crust is provided having a water activity in the range of about 0.9 to about 0.95. The deep dish pizza crust is ideally suited for use in a refrigerated, ready-to-eat pizza kit. The deep dish pizza crust is of a convenient size and shape (generally square and about 4 by about 4 by about 0.75 in. deep) and is especially adapted as a single serving or snack food product. Also provided is a kit for preparing ready-to-eat deep dish pizza, the kit including one or more deep dish pizza crusts, pizza sauce, cheese, and one or more pizza toppings. The deep dish pizza crusts are designed so that they can be nested so as to reduce the volume requirements in the kit. Each of the components of the pizza kit, including the deep dish pizza crusts, is hermetically sealed from the other food items to substantially retard or prevent flavor, moisture, and microbial migration from one food item to another. The deep dish pizza crusts retain a soft, desirable texture throughout their anticipated shelf lives.